DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 168 024 CS 204 724

AUTHOR Carr, Robin L.
TITLE Death, Children, and Books.
PUB DATE [77]
NOTE 25p.; Bibliography prepared at Illinois State University

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescent Literature; *Childhood Attitudes; *Childrens Books; Childrens Literature; *Death; Elementary Secondary Education; Fiction; Grief; Nonfiction; Reading Materials; Realism

ABSTRACT

The books listed in this annotated bibliography are intended to help children understand the reality of death and deal with the mystery and emotions that accompany it. Each entry indicates the genre and reading level of the book and provides a brief description of the attitude toward death that it conveys. The selections include fables, fantasy, poetry, humor, realistic fiction, historical fiction, mystery, and picture books; grade levels range from kindergarten through grade 12. A list of factual articles, essays, and books on children's reactions to death and dying is appended. (MAI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED168024

DEATH, CHILDREN, AND BOOKS

Dr. Robin L. Carr
Illinois State University

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Robin L. Carr

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

> When you die, you're dead.
> Try saying that word, DEAD.
> It is a hard word to say isn't it?
> Not hard to pronounce, really,
> but hard to make yourself say.
> . . . DEAD is DEAD.
> It is not a game. It is very real.
> (Grollman 1976)

Death is a powerful phenomenon. It makes no distinction as to age, sex, color or creed, but it touches the lives of all human beings as it intrigues, scares, worries, and sometimes elates. The tragedy, pathos, and courage death evokes from mankind have provided the inspiration for many great works of literature. Fear of, the attempt to avoid, resignation to, and acceptance of death as it touches life are much used themes which allow the reader to explore not only the mysteries of death and of eternity, but also the mysteries of his/her own inner being and soul.

Parents, teachers, librarians, ministers, nurses, and physicians need to be prepared to aid in the task of helping children to understand, and to cope with death's eternal mystery and/or its specific touch upon their lives. The scope of the included bibliography of children's books is broad so that it will be of aid not only to children of both sexes but also to parents and friends of the dying or of the bereaved. This breadth is also reflected in the manner in which death is handled by various authors, for some show death as "gentle night" and others as "the great destroyer." Despair, anger, violence, hope for an after-life, and even humor are presented as representative of the "death" experience.

Factual information on children's reactions to death and dying may be found in the companion bibliography of articles, essays and books on Death Education. Many of the works will be helpful to adults who often unwittingly abandon the dying, or grieving child who wants to talk about what is happening. It is this false sense of protection which keeps many adults from helping the child to talk out his fears and to gain acceptance of the situation. Using this bibliography adults can better judge the accuracy of the sociological information contained in the books on the first list.

A knowledge of these factual works will also allow the reader to better judge whether a specific child is ready for a certain book. One must always keep in mind that "it may be pertinent that we do not shut out children from the realities of death," but that ". . . level of explanation, timing, and individual differences have to be appreciated." (Feifel 1971).

Feifel, Herman. "The Meaning of Death in American Society: Implications for Education." in Death Education: Preparation for Living, ed. Betty R. Green & Donald P. Irish (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman 1971.) p. 5.

Grollman, Earl A. Talking About Death: A Dialogue Between Parent and Child. Boston: Beacon Press 1976. pp. 2-3.

CS204724

Books for Children and Adolescents

Babbitt, Ellen C., Jataka Tales. New York: Century Co., 1940.

Genre: Fables Grades: 4 and up

In one story a crane has tricked a pool of fish into letting him carry them to a larger lake. Instead, he eats them. He tries the same trick with a crab, but the crab pinches his head off.

Attitude: Death as poetic justice.

Babbitt, Natalie, Tuck Everlasting. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 5 to 8

This book is the story of a family which unknowingly stops the wheel of life. They were in fact a living definition of the word "forever." One child finds, however, that death might be preferable to mere continuity.

Attitude: Death as possible friend.

Beatty, Patricia, Long Way to Whiskey Creek. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1971.

Genre: Humor book Grades: 5 to 9

A humorous and entertaining tale of the old West in which two boys travel four hundred miles across Texas to pick up and take home the body of an older brother.

Attitude: Death as a natural part of the continuing pattern of life.

Behn, Harry, Faraway Lurs. Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1963.

Genre: "Reconstruction" Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

The story of two prehistoric tribes and a romance which develops between two young people despite growing conflict. A witch causes two greedy men to sink in quicksand, and the young lover superstitiously gives up her life to restore a water supply which has dried up.

Attitude: Death as romantic tragedy.

Bemelmans, Ludwig, Parsley. New York: Harper and Row, 1953.

Genre: Picture book Grades: K to 3

A picture book-animal fantasy in which a tree and a deer are born and grow old together. The tree, using one of its branches, knocks a hunter over a cliff to protect the deer.

Attitude: Death as poetic justice.

Brown, Margaret Wise, The Dead Bird. New York: Scott Books, 1958.

Genre: Picture book Grades: K to 3

Children find a dead bird and give it a funeral. Each day they take flowers to the grave, until they finally forget.

Attitude: Death as a natural part of the continuing pattern of life.

Buck, Pearl S., The Big Wave. New York: J. Day Co., 1948.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 and up

A young Japanese fisherman is puzzled and confused by death after his entire village is destroyed by a tidal wave. He learns to appreciate life more and not to be afraid of death.

Attitude: Death as a natural part of the continuing pattern of life.

Burchard, Peter, Bimby. New York: Coward-McCann, 1968.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

Bimby, a young slave boy, decides to run away after he sees the callousness his master shows when an old black slave is killed.

Attitude: Callousness to Death.

Burton, Hester, In Spite of All Terror. Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1969.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

A story of a young orphan girl who helps in the evacuation of Dunkirk in World War II. Death is seen on all sides as the hundreds of small boats try to cross the channel under a constant air attack.

Attitude: Mass death as a part of war.

Chase, Richard, The Jack Tales. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943.

Genre: Folk Tales Grades: 4 and up

The familiar European folk tales are given an Appalachian Mountain flavor as "Jack in the Bean Stalk" becomes "Jack and the Bean Tree" and "Hansel and Gretel" becomes "Two Lost Babes."

Attitude: Death as poetic justice.

Clapp, Patricia, Jane-Emily. New York: Lothrop, Lee, Shepherd, 1969.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 6 to 9

The spirit of twelve-year-old Emily returns to haunt Jane, a new girl living in Emilgy's old family home. The spirit tries to control Jane, but it is finally defeated when a crystal globe is destroyed.

Attitide: Death and supernatural experiences.

Cleary, Beverly, Runaway Ralph. New York: William Morrow Co., 1970.

Genre: Animal Fantasy Grades: 3 to 6

Ralph, a small mouse with a gas operated toy motorcycle, decides to run away from home and to visit a nearby boys' camp. His first adventure is one in which a tom cat uses him to try to teach his small son how to kill a mouse.

Attitude: Death as an enemy.

Cleaver, Bill and Vera, Grover. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High

Ten-year-old Grover's mother commits suicide. Neither Grover or his father can accept this. When a neighbor woman tells Grover his mother was insane, the boy transfers his hatred to her pet turkey and kills it.

Attitude: Death's influence on the living.

Cleaver, Bill and Vera, The Mimosa Tree. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High

A realistic and, perhpas, sensationalized account of some hill children who have been abandoned in Chicago. Their struggle to survive is described in detail. One boy is shown dying of an epileptic fit on the streets while people simply rush on by.

Attitude: Callousness to death.

Cleaver, Bill and Vera, Where the Lillies Bloom. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1969.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High

Upon her father's death, Mary Call, a fourteen year old mountain girl, follows his wishes and buries him in a hidden spot on the mountainside. She then struggles to keep her family together learning to gather herbs to earn money. A sensationalized account of death, love and competence in living.

Attitude: Death as a part of the continuing pattern of life.

Cohen, Barbara, Thank You, Jackie Robinson. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., 1977.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 4 to 6

A young white lad tries to cheer up a dying black man by getting him an autographed ball from Brooklyn Dodger's star Jackie Robinson.

Attitude: Life after death is sustained through memories.

Corcoran, Barbara, Sasha My Friend. New York: Atheneum, 1969.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 5 to 8

Hallie, a young girl whose mother is kilied in an accident which also maims her father, goes to live on a Christmas tree farm in Montana. The finding and raising of a wolf cub helps to relieve her hurt. Then she must kill Sasha, her pet, because of injuries he sustains when caught in a trap.

Attitude: Death as a recurring pattern of life.

Cunningham, Julia, Dorp Dead. New York: Pantheon Books, 1965.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High

An orphan is sent to live in a foster home, only to see his foster father beat a dog to teach it how to die and to watch as the man builds a cage big enough for him.

Attitude: Death as a cruel part of the continuing pattern of life.

De Angeli, Marguerite, Door in the Wall. New York: Doubleday, 1949.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

Robin, a young noble boy living in the thirteenth century, is left to find for himself when the plague kills the servants and leaves him crippled during a year when his parents are away. The crippled boy strives to find a "door" around his handicap and to success.

Attitude: Death as only a part of the continuing patterns of life.

De la Ramee, Louise, A Dog of Flanders. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1925.

Genre: "Period Realistic" Fiction Grades: Only for historical value

A young boy, denied help by society and the church, freezes to death with his dog in his arms as he steals a view of a painting he had never had money to pay to see.

Attitude: Death as romantic tragedy

de Paoloa, Tomi, Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1973.

Genre: Picture Book Grades: K to 4

Tommy has many wonderful times with his great grandmother (Nana Upstairs) and his grandmother (Nana Downstairs). At the end of the book each dies, but lives on in his memory.

Attitude: Continued life through good memories.

Donovan, John, I'll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip. Evanston, Illinois: Harper & Row, 1969.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: High School

A young boy, confused by his parents' divorce and the world in general, develops a vague physical relationship with another boy. When his dog is killed the boy blames his homosexual experience and feels extremely guilty.

Attitude: Death and feelings of guilt.

Dorbrin, Arnold, Scat!. Four Winds Press, 1971.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: K to 4

Scott angers his grandmother by becoming a jazz musician. When Grandma dies Scott listens to his heart and not to his head and plays the blues for her on his harmonica.

Attitude: Death as an individual ever different experience.

Dunn, Mary Lois, The Man in the Box: A Story from Vietnam. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High

A young Vietnamese boy helps an American soldier escape from a Viet Cong torture box (in which he is forced to squat for hours) because the boy's father had been killed at the end of such a torture; (and so the boy did not want to see anyone suffer in the same way). The boy is left alone when the soldier is finally found by American troops.

Attitude: Death as part of war.

Dunning, Stephen, Ed., Some Haystacks Don't Even Have Any Needles and Other Complete Modern Poems. Glenview, Illinois: Scott Foresman and Company, 1969

Genre: Poetry Grades: Jr. High and up

A book of contemporary poems, many about the callousness modern people have toward death, until a loved one dies.

"My Old Maid Aunt"	Dodi Schultz, p. 137
"War"	Joseph Langland, p. 85
"Fable"	Merrill Moore, p. 138
"Rain or Hail"	E. E. Cummings, p. 136
"Suicide Pond"	Kathy McLaughlin, p. 137

Attitude: Death as one of the many recurring patterns of life.

Eckert, Allan W., Incident at Hawk's Hill. New York: Dell, 1972.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 4 to 8

The death of animals is clearly present as a badger dies in a trap as her babies starve nearby.

Attitude: The violent death of animals.

Engdahl, Sylvia, Enchantress from the Stars. New York: Atheneum, 1970.

Genre: Science Fiction Grades: Jr. High and up

An excellent science fiction story in which a highly civilized planet sends a group to intercede in an invasion of another planet. One of the party gives her life freely for the sake of many.

Attitude: Death as necessary and purposeful. Sacrificial Death.

Fassler, Joan, My Grandfather Died Today. New York: Behavioral Publications, 1971.

A young boy's grandfather prepares his grandson to handle the pain of death (the grandfather's) by helping him to see that he has "to go right on playing and reading, and running, and laughing, and growing up."

Attitude: Preparation for Death.

Felsen, Henry Gregor, Street Rod. New York: Random House, 1953.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High

The story of how a group of wild hot rod enthusiasts try to earn the right to a town approved drag strip. They all quiet down. The last chapter shows a short lapse and sees one boy and his girl driving into a river.

Attitude: Death as an absurd and senseless result of the reckless pattern of youth.

Field, Rachel, Calico Bush. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1931.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 5 to 8

A young French girl comes to America as an indentured servant. In the year which follows, she experiences romance and the hardships of pioneer life including being captured by Indians and witnessing the death of a small baby.

Attitude: Death as only a part of the continuing patterns of life.

Fitzhugh, Louise, Bang, Bang Your're Dead. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Genre: Picture book Grades: 2 to 4

A group of boys enjoys playing "Bang, Bang You're Dead" until another group comes and demands they leave when a real "war" with rocks and nails in boards breaks out. They realize no one wins in war.

Attitude: Death as play.

Ford, Paul, New England Primer. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962 (reprint).

Genre: Text book Grades: Only for historical value.

A small book containing the alphabet, bible quotations, and other religious items. An account of the burning of John Rogers at the stake is included.

Attitude: Death as a religious teaching tool.

Fox, Paula, How Many Miles to Babylon? New York: D. White Company, 1967.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High

A small black boy is forced into stealing for a gang of older boys. While away from home he dreams his mother dies and envisions her sailing home to heaven in Africa.

Attitude: Death as an individual interpretation.

Fox, Paula, Portrait of Ivan. Scarsdale, New York: Bradbury Press, 1969.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

During the weeks Ivan sits to have his portrait painted, he wonders what his mother was like. (He really did not know since his father had destroyed all her photographs.) He then learns to live his own life.

Attitude: Death's influence on the living.

George, Jean, Who Really Killed Cock Robin? New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1971.

Genre: Mystery Grades: 5 to 8

A mystery in which a young boy tries to discover what ecological imbalance kills a Robin that his pollution-fighting town has come to love.

Attitude: Death as a teaching situation.

Graham, Lorene, South Town. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1965.

Genre: "Period Realistic" Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

David, a bright black boy, tells how his family is driven from their small southern farm by prejudice and hatred. A white man trying to help is killed, intensifying the situation.

Attitude: Death as a senseless result of man's prejudice and socio-economic patterns.

Greene, Constance, Beat the Turtle Drum. New York: Viking, 1976.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 4 to 8

A beautiful exploration into tragic death. Opens with Jan Serrallier's quotation: "We, too, find ourselves wishing that youth may last forever and sorrow never come."

Attitude: Tragic Death.

Harris, Audrey, Why Did He Die? Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Co., 1965.

A small boy's grandfather dies and the boy is seen asking himself: What is death? What is a cemetary? and many other questions. Finally, he goes to play realizing that although he won't forget grandfather that life goes on.

Attitude: Acceptance of Death.

Hinton, S. E., The Outsiders. New York: Viking Press, Inc., 1967.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High and up

A story about gang life in New York. A young teenager defends himself in an attack, killing the other boy. He then flees to the country.

Attitude: Death as a senseless result of human socio-economic patterns.

Hunt, Irene, Up a Road Slowly. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1966.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 5 to 8

The story of Julie Trilling, whose father sends her to live with an old maid aunt upon his wife's death. Julie feels sad when Aggie, a dirty, ill kept girl she scorned in life, dies, but Julie realizes that if Aggie were to be alive again, her scorn would still exist.

Attitude: Death as a maturing and teaching experience in life's patterns.

Jacobs Joseph, Ed., Aesop's Fables. [As printed by William Caxton] London: D. Nutt, 1889.

Genre: Fables Grades: 3 and up

Many of the famous fables such as "The Tortoise and the Ducks" contain death as poetic justice.

Attitude: Death as poetic justice.

Jones, Adrienne, The Hawks of Chelney. New York: Harper and Row, 1978. Hardbound Fiction.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 7 to 10

Siri, a boy born late to an old fishing couple, becomes independent and very close to nature. When he tries to protect a pair of osprey's which the villagers superstitiously condemn, they try to kill him. He and a girl friend are thought to have jumped from the cliffs into the sea.

Attitude: Romantic Death; Death preferable to a compromised life.

Jones, Weyman, Edge of Two Worlds. New York: The Dial Press, 1968.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 5 to 8

The story of Sequyoah's, (the Cherokee who invented an alphabet for the Cherokee language) desire to take the "talking leaves" to a splinter group in Mexico before he dies. A young white boy who has just escaped a Comanche massacre, is forced to go along for self-protection.

Attitudes: Death as a savage and cruel part of life.
Death as a natural part of the continuing patterns of life.

Kantorowitz, Mildred, When Violet Died. New York: Parent's Magazine Press, 1973.

Genre: Picture Book Grades: K to 6

When Violet the parakeet dies the children feel sad and give her a funeral. Later they decide that Blanche the cat will never die for they will pass the name on from one generation of cat to the next.

Attitude: The continuation of life, despite death.

Kingsley, Charles, The Water Babies. New York: John C. Winston Company, 1930.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: Only for historical value.

A young boy drowns in a river and becomes a waterbaby. He has many happy and mischievious adventures underwater.

Attitude: Death as a gentle part of the continuing patterns of life.

Lawson, John, The Spring Rider. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1968.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 6 to 9

A fantasy in which two children in the present meet and have adventures with Lincoln and soldiers of the Civil War. Lincoln is trying to get the bugler to blow an end to the hatred and prejudice which allow the war to continue in hearts today.

Attitude: Death is not always the worst part of life.

Lawson, Robert, Mr. Twigg's Mistake. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1947.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 4 to 7

Humorous fantasy about a boy who owns a mole the size of a St. Bernard. The many funny episodes are followed with the mole dying gracefully by disappearing into the sky on a geyser of oil.

Attitude: Death as a natural part of the continuing patterns of life.

Lawson, Robert, Rabbit Hill. New York: The Viking Press, 1945.

Genre: Animal Fantasy Grades: 4 to 8

The animals on Rabbit Hill are excited because new folks are moving into the vacant house. Animal thoughts of how people can cause death are experienced.

Attitude: Death as an ever present possibility which cannot control life.

Lee, Virginia, The Magic Moth. New York: Seabury, 1972.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: K to 6

When Maryanne, who has been ill a long while, dies, a white moth emerges from a cocoon in the warm room suggesting to Mark-O that life continues after death.

Attitude: Symbolistic life after death. Preparation for death.

Lewis, C. S., The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1950.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 4 to 8

An allegorical animal fantasy based on the Christian religion. The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ are suggested.

Attitude: Death as a necessary means to achieve good.

Line, David, Soldier and Me. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 to 8

A mystery story about two boys who see a murder and are afraid they have been seen.

Attitude: Death as an evil enemy.

MacDonald, George, At the Back of the North Wind. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1924.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: Only for historical value.

A young boy who sleeps in a drafty hay loft makes friends with the North Wind. After having many dreamlike adventures traveling on the back of the wind, Diamond gently dies, going to live at the back of the North Wind.

Attitude: Death as romantic tragedy.
Continuation of life after death.

Mayle, Peter, "Will I Go to Heaven?" New York: Corwin Books, 1976.

Genre: Humor Grades: 4 and up

"Heaven is not like any place on earth. You can't go and visit. You can't send letters telling your friends what the weather is like and how you're getting along. You can't make phone calls (not even long distance).

Attitude: Humorous side of death.

Miles, Mishka, Annie and the Old One. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971.

Annie is afraid that her grandmother will die when a rug she is weaving is completed and, so, offers to take her place at the loom. She learns that death can occur and yet life goes on.

Attitude: The continuation of life. The offer to sacrifice ones self.

Mother Goose, Mother Goose. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, Inc., 1968.

Genre: Poetry/Nursery Rhymes Grades: Preschool and up

Death of a poetic justice form is often shown as in "Humpty Dumpty," p. 111.

Attitude: Death as poetic justice.

Niles, John Jacob, The Ballad Book of John Jacob Niles. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961.

Genre: Folklore Grades: 5 and up

Many ballads present death in a romantic tragedy format which even boys will enjoy because of their sadness.
Examples: "Lord Randal" p. 58
"Barbara Allan" pp. 203-206

Attitude: Death as romantic tragedy.

Norton, Mary, The Borrowers. New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1953.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 3 to 6

The Clocks, a family whose members stand only six inches tall, face all the dangers of living in a world populated by large animals and human beings. Death is always a possibility.

Attitude: Death as a natural and ever present part of the continuing patterns of life.

Noyes, Alfred, "The Highwayman," from Helen Dean Fish, Boys Book of Verse. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1951.

Genre: Poetry Grades: 6 and up

"The Highwayman" is a romantic tragedy in verse form about an outlaw who falls in love with a young girl only to be betrayed by another of her suitors.

Attitude: Death as romantic tragedy.

O'Dell, Scott, The Black Pearl. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

A story about a boy finding a large pearl supposedly cursed with death. When the boy's father dies, he starts to throw the pearl into the sea.

Attitude: Superstitions about death.

O'Dell, Scott, Island of the Blue Dolphins. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 5 to 8

A young Indian girl, whose tribe is being removed from an island, is left alone when her small brother is killed by wolves. She survives many years alone.

Attitude: Death as part of the continuing patterns of life.

O'Dell, Scott, Sing Down the Moon. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

An account of the removal of the Navajo Indians from their lands to reservations further west. Many die along the 1000 mile trip and others later starve. Tall Boy and his friend are two young people whose pride is destroyed by helplessness and then restored as they escape and return to their homelands to raise a family.

Attitude: Death as a result of racial prejudice.

Ottley, Reginald, No More Tomorrow. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 and up

Death is a constant threat in this book about an old man, who has chosen to travel the barren outback forever. We see his home and family burning as the old man remembers how he decided to just wander. The plot seems to rest on his family's death and his feeling of guilt in escaping.

Attitude: Death and guilt.

Paley, Grace, "Samuel," from Something Else, Leo Kneer, Ed. Glenview, Illinois: Scott-Foresman, 1970.

Genre: Short story Grades: 5 and up

One of several short stories and poems dealing with death and socio-economic problems.

Attitude: Death as part of reckless youth.

Paterson, Katherine, Bridge to Terabithia. New York: Thomas Y. Crowel Co., 1977.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 3 to 6

When his good friend Leslie Burke drowns in a creek, Jesse Aarons feels guilty, then angry before he finally accepts her death, but keeps her memory alive.

Attitude: The many stages of human reaction to death.

Peck, Robert Newton, A Day No Pigs Would Die. New York:

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 to 10

A young Shaker boy is forced to mature when his father forces him to kill his pet pig. The boy is being prepared for his father's oncoming death.

Attitude: Acceptance of Death and preparation of loved ones for it.

Polland, Madeline, To Tell My People. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 7 to 12

A young Saxon barbarian is captured by Caesar's army and taken to Rome. When Caesar returns, she goes also to tell her people of the wonders she has seen. A close fellow slave is killed by her people who do not understand these "new" people and attack.

Attitude : Death as misunderstanding.

Rawlings, Marjorie (Kinnan), The Yearling. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 and up

A young boy of the Florida Everglades is ordered to kill the deer he has raised from a fawn. Love keeps the boy from doing it until his mother wounds the deer, and love then makes him ease the deer's pain. Story of growing up.

Attitude: Death helps others grow stronger.

Rodman, Maia (Wojciechowska), Shadow of a Bull. New York: Athenuem Publishers, 1964.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

Manolo, surviving son of a great bullfighter, finds his neighbors and even his mother expecting him to follow in his father's footsteps. The boy finally decides his own destiny.

Attitude: Death's effects on the living.

Salten, Felix, Bambi: A Life in the Woods. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1928.

Genre: Animal Fantasy Grades: 5 to 8

The life story of a fawn growing up. The animals' thoughts about man are seen. Man is seen as an enemy called Death.

Attitude: Death as an ever present mystery.

Sandburg, Helga, Bo and the Old Donkey. New York: The Dial Press, 1965.

Genre: Picture book Grades: 2 to 6

Bo awakens to hear his father talking about putting the old donkey to sleep. He knew death was part of life, but had to prove to himself that he was grown up and not a baby so he hides and watches as his father kills his beloved old donkey. He then goes to find a new turtle.

Attitude: Death is something we can know without being afraid.

Sherwood, Mary, The Fairchild Family. London and Edinburgh: T. C. and E. C. Jack, 1818.

Genre: "Period Realistic" Fiction Grades: Only for historical value

A book of the early 1800's showing how good children are often led astray by evil children. Death is taught about as an enemy to be defeated by virtue and goodness.

Attitude: Death as a religious teaching tool.

Sideman, Belle, Ed., The World's Best Fairy Tales. New York: Readers Digest Association, 1967.

Genre: Folklore Grades: 4 to 8

A book of common fairy tales and folktales, many of which present death usually as poetic justice. Included are:

"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs"	pp. 305-319
"Three Billy Goats Gruff"	pp. 361-364

Attitude: Death as poetic justice.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis, Zlatch the Goat and Other Stories. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966.

Genre: Folklore Grades: 5 and up

A collection of Jewish folktales from Eastern Europe. One, called "Fool's Paradise," pp. 5-20, tells of Atzel who imagines he has died and gone to Paradise. To convince him, his friends pretend to be angels and show him a paradise which is constantly the same and never changing. He then wants to live and they tell him he is not dead.

Attitude: Death as a door to an unknown life.

Smith, Agnes, An Edge of the Forest. New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1959.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 6 to 9

A boy's pet black sheep wanders into the woods and meets all the wild creatures. She sees the black panther as being death and is shocked that the wild animals look on man as the most prevalent symbol of death.

Attitude: Death and symbols of death.

Smith, Doris B., A Taste of Blackberries. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1973.

When Jamie is stung by a bee he dies. His friend is shown first denying Jamie's death, then being angry and finally accepting his friend's death.

Attitude: The stages of human reaction to death with final acceptance.

Speare, Elizabeth, The Bronze Bow. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

A young boy of Israel is orphaned when the Romans crucify his parents. He then joins a gang called The Bronze Bow so as to kill all the Romans he can. His sister, however, complicates things by falling in love with a Roman soldier. Jesus Christ teaches David to yearn for peace and not revenge.

Attitude: Death is shown as a beginning of new hopes.

Taylor, Theodore, The Cay. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

During World War II, an eleven-year-old prejudiced white boy and a stubborn, superstitious black West Indian of seventy or eighty are the only survivors of a sinking ship. The boy has been blinded in the escape. The struggle for survival ends as the old man gives his life for the boy.

Attitude: Death is sometimes necessary.

Ter Haar, Jaap, Boris. New York: Delacorte Press, 1969.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

This is a character sketch of a young Russian boy who survives the German seige of Leningrad during World War II. His struggle to stay alive is made clearer by contrasting death of starving people in the streets. The individual humane side of a group of German soldiers is also seen in the book.

Attitude: Indifference and callousness toward death.

Tunis, John, His Enemy, His Friend. New York: Morrow Jr. Books, 1967.

Genre: Historical Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

On the edge of the war zone early in World War II, a young German Lieutenant is kind to the people of a captured French village. (He even teaches the children to play soccer.) Things change when a high-ranking Gestapo agent is killed in the town, and the Germans kill some villagers in retaliation. Years after the war the officer is the star soccer player for Germany, and a boy from the village is the star for France. After the game, the German officer's bus is stopped, and he is killed.

Attitude: Death can create bitterness and control the actions of the living.

Ullman, James, R., Banner in the Sky. New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1954.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 6 to 9

When a young Swiss boy's father dies climbing a mountain, the boy must prove to himself that he is not a coward by scaling the citadel.

Attitudes: Death as an enemy.
Death strengthening the living.

Viorst, Judith, The Tenth Good Thing About Barney. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1971.

Genre: Picture book Grades: K to 5

When a small boy's cat dies, his mother tells him to think of ten good things about Barney. The last is that he will help the flowers to grow.

Attitude: Death as a part of the continuing patterns of life.

Ward, Lynd Kendall, The Biggest Bear. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952.

Genre: Picture book Grades: K to 5

A delightful picture book about a small boy who knows he must kill a pet bear he has raised from a cub (because it is ravishing the crops.) The close bonds of love are seen, and the bear is finally saved.

Attitude: Death is sometimes necessary.

Wersba, Barbara, Run Softly, Go Fast. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1970.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: Jr. High and up

A boy's diary tells about many years of estrangement with his father. The boy has tried the drug scene and wears long hair. His father, who is dying of cancer, orders him to get his hair cut. The boy does weeks later, but his father is not able to know. The theme involves the fact life involves some things which are more devastating than death.

Attitude: Death is not the worst part of life.

White, Elwyn B., Charlotte's Web. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1952.

Genre: Fantasy Grades: 3 to 7

A delightful barnyard fable about Charlotte, a spider who saves the life of Wilbur the pig. A touching description of Charlotte's acceptance of death is presented as is the continuation of life through Charlotte's children.

Attitudes: Continuation of life.
Death as part of nature.

Wier, Ester, The Loner. New York: David McKay Company, 1963.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 4 to 8

A boy watches as Raidy, the first friend he has ever had, is dragged through a potato picker. The boy then travels across the country finally to be adopted by a woman shepherdess and to find his place of belonging.

Attitude: Callousness of death.

Windsor, Patricia, The Summer Before. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 5 to 8

An adolescent girl's reactions to her boyfriend's accidental death. She is so extremely upset that finally she must take psychiatic therapy to learn to accept the situation.

Attitude: The denial stage of reaction to death.

Zemach, Harve, The Judge: An Untrue Tale. New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, Inc., 1969.

Genre: Picture book Grades: 3 to 6

A humorous, cumulative verse tale about a judge who does not listen to people telling him about a monster until it is too late (for him to escape).

Attitude: Death as poetic justice.

Zolotow, Charlotte, My Grandson Lew. New York: Harper, 1974.

Genre: Realistic Fiction Grades: 3 to 7

Lew misses his grandfather who had often hugged and comforted him. After the old man's death Lew talks tenderly to his mother about his memories.

Attitude: Life after death through memories.

SUGGESTED BOOKS ABOUT CHILDREN AND DEATH

Adler, C. S. "The Meaning of Death to Children," Arizona Medicine, Vol. 26 (March, 1969), 266-276.

Anthony, Sylvia. The Child's Discovery of Death. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1940.

Beatly, Donald C. "Shall We Talk About Death?" Pastoral Psychology, Vol. 6 (February, 1955), 11-14.

Birk, Alma. "The Bereaved Child," Mental Health, Vol. 25:4 (1966), 226-232.

Cain, Albert C., Irene Fast, and Mary Ericksen. "Children's Disturbed Reactions to Death of a Sibling," American Journal of Ortho-Psychiatry, Vol. 32 (1962), 297-298.

Caprio, F. S. "A Study of Some Psychological Reactions During Prepubescence to the Idea of Death." Psychiatric Quarterly, Volume 24 (March, 1950), 495-505.

Davis, J. A. "The Attitude of Parents to the Approaching Death of Their Child," Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology, Vol. 6 (June, 1964), 286-288.

Evans, Audrey E., M.D. "If a Child Must Die . . ." New England Journal of Medicine, Vol. 278 (1968), 138-142.

Fargues, Marie. The Child and the Mystery of Death Glenn Rock, New Jersey: Dews Books, 1966.

Gartley, W. and Bernasconi, M. "The Concept of Death in Children," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Vol. 110 (1967), 71-85.

Gesell, A. The Child from Five to Ten. New York: Harper Brothers, 1946.

Green, Betty R. and Donald P. Irish. Death Education: Preparation for Living : Proceedings of the Hamline University Symposium. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenhman Publishing Co., 1971.

Grollman, Earl A. (ed.) Explaining Death to Children. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.

Hamovitch, Maurice B. The Parent and the Fatally Ill Child. Los Angeles: Delman Publishing Co., 1964.

"How Well Prepared are you for Death in the Young." Patient Care Magazine, May 30 1970.

Jackson, Edgar N. Telling a Child About Death. New York: Channel Press, 1965.

Jordahl, Edna K. Helping Children Understand Death. St. Paul: University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service, 1968.

Journal of Thanatology. Volume I (December, 1970) Foundation of Thanatology: 630 West 168th St. New York, New York 10032.

Kastenbaum, R. "Time and Death in Adolescence" in The Meaning of Death, ed. H. Feifel. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959, pp. 99-113.

Keeler, W. R. "Children's Reaction to the Death of a Parent" in Hoch, Paul H. and Joseph Zubin. Depression. New York: Greene and Stratton, 1954, 109-120.

Klingberg, Gote. "The Distinction Between Living and Not Living Among 7-10 Year Old Children," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Vol. 90 (1957), 227-238.

Kubler-Ross, Elisabeth. On Death and Dying. New York: Macmillan, 1969. The five stages a person travels through when faced with his own death.

Lamers, William M. Jr. "Death, Grief Mourning, the Funeral, and The Child," an illustrated presentation given at the 84th Annual National Funeral Directors Association, Chicago: (Nov., 1965).

Leviton, Daniel. "The Need for Education of Death and Suicide," Journal of School Health, Vol. 39, (April, 1969), 270-274.

Malmquist, Carl P. "Adolescents View Death," Minnesota Journal of Education (December, 1970), 39.

Mauer, Adah. "The Child's Knowledge of Non-existence," Journal of Existential Psychiatry Vol. 2, (1961), 193-212.

Middleton, W. C. "Some Reactions toward Death Among College Students," Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology. Volume 31 (1936), 165-173.

Moellenhoff, Fritz. "Ideas of Children about Death," Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, Vol. 3 (1939), 148-156.

Nagy, M. H. "The Child's Theories Concerning Death," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Vol. 73 (1948), 3-27.

Nagy, M. H. "The Child's View of Death," in The Meaning of Death, ed. A. Feifel. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959, pp. 79-98.

Olshaker, Bennett. What Shall We Tell the Kids? New York: Arbor House, 1971.

Reed, Elizabeth L. Helping Children with the Mystery of Death. Nashville: Atiugdon Press, 1970.

Rheingold, J. C. The Mother Anxiety and Death. Boston: Little Brown, 1967.

Rosenblum, J., PhD. How to Explain Death to a Child. International order of the Golden Rule, 1963.

Schilder, P. and D. Wechsler. "The Attitudes of Children toward Death," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Volume 45 (1934), 406-451.

Stein, Sara. About Dying: An Open Family Book for Parents and Children Together, Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, Ltd. 1974.

Steiner, Gloria L. "Children's Concepts of Life and Death: A Developmental Study," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1965.

Toynbee, Arnold. Man's Concern with Death. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

Vanden, Bergh, R. L. "Let's Talk About Death to overcome Inhibiting Emotions," American Journal of Nursing, Vol. 66 (January 1966), 71-73.

Watt, Anne S. "Helping Children to Mourn I." Medical Insight, July 1971.

Watt, Anne S. "Helping Children to Mourn II." Medical Insight, August 1971.

Wolfenstein, Martha. "How is Mourning Possible?" The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, Vol. 21 (1966).